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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

to the Thirsk Rural District Council for the Year, 1909.

MR. CHAIRMAN and GENTLEMEN,

It is again my pleasing duty to present to you my Annual Report, concerning the general sanitary condition and health of the District. The annexed Tables of the Vital Statistics are deserving of some comment, showing as they do at a glance, the sickness and mortality during the year, and likewise a comparison with the conditions of the previous ten years.

Table 1. 163 Deaths were registered during the year, 96 Males and 67 Females which constitutes a Death Rate of 12.82 per thousand of the population, it is 1.59 below the average for the last decade in which there is only one lower rate. The seasons of the year characterised as cold and wet were not unhealthy. The mortality of Infants under one year is the lowest in the decade, but owing to the comparatively small number of Births, the rate per thousand children born is last but one on the list. 291 Births were registered during the year, 157 Males and 134 Females, equal to a Birth Rate of 22.89 per thousand of the population, and is 1.14 below the average of the last decade. The declining Birth Rate and depopulation of the rural districts were given as the reasons in a previous report, for making no allowance for an increase in the population. The Birth Rate and Death Rate are calculated on the Census of 1901.

Table 2. For the purposes of Registration, the District is divided into three localities, THIRSK, TOPCLIFFE, SUTTON. On comparing the Death Rate of these localities, we find Sutton has the highest rate 16.46, Thirsk the second 12.45, and Topcliffe 11.08. In my last Report comment was made of the high Infant Mortality in the Topcliffe district. This year Topcliffe has the lowest rate and Sutton the highest one: in the latter district Bronchitis accounts to a great extent for the loss of infant life.

Table 3. A review of the cases of Infectious Diseases during the year is most satisfactory. The Diseases which may be due to insanitary conditions such as Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, and Enteric Fever are remarkably few. There were only 3 cases of Diphtheria, 1 of Typhoid Fever, and 10 Scarlet Fever. Measles and Whooping Cough accounted for the remaining 185 cases. The schools were probably the means of spreading these diseases.

Table 4. Of the Causes of Death it is pleasing to record the highest number 31 were due to Old Age, followed by Heart Disease 23, Bronchitis 16, Diseases of the Nervous System 16, Premature Birth 5.

Table 5. As previously stated the actual number of Deaths under one year is the lowest in the decade. Wasting Diseases of which Premature Birth claims 5, Atrophy and Debility 4, and Congenital Defect 1, make a total of 10, and account for the greater number of the Deaths. The careful attention of the mother during pregnancy, and of the infants as regards feeding and hygienic care, should appreciably reduce this cause of mortality. The remaining Causes of Death were Bronchitis and Convulsions each 4, Diarrhoea 3, Measles and Pneumonia each 2.

The Notification of Births Act 1907 is not adopted in this district.

The District is Rural in character and the occupation of the inhabitants generally relate to Agriculture. There is only one factory in the district which employs more than 100 men. This factory in which Agricultural Implements are made occupies a large area of ground, and is roomy and well ventilated. The conditions under which the employees work are in no way unhealthy. There is a sufficiency of house accommodation for the working classes, and houses are in the course of erection in the parishes of Sowerby and Carlton Miniott. Regulations regarding the supervision of the erection of new houses are not enforced in this district. The attention of the Council is again called to the advantages of adopting these regulations.

No action has been required under the Housing of the Working Classes Act.

Water Supply. The Reservoir supplying Thirsk and Sowerby is situated on the Moorland of the Hambleton range of Hills. The water is good, soft in character, and sufficient for the needs of the community. The village of Sutton has been supplied with a new water plant. The spring is situated in the neighbourhood of Hood Hill at the base of the Hambleton Hills, and gives the village an abundant supply of good water. Cowesby and Kilburn are supplied in a similar manner. The remaining villages in the district are dependent upon wells for their water supply.

Dairy Cowsheds and Milkshops. The quality of the milk supplied in the district is good. No Milkseller has been prosecuted for supplying unwholesome or adulterated milk. The Nuisance Inspector reports the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops in Thirsk and Sowerby have complied with the order of the Act.

Foods. The Inspector of Nuisances undertakes the duty of inspection of the meat of the district, and reports to the Medical Officer of Health the condition of any food, which he considers diseased or unfit for human consumption. There have been no carcasses or parts of carcasses exposed for sale found to be tuberculous.

There are nine registered slaughter houses in the district, which are visited three times a month by the Nuisance Inspector, who reports their condition to the Council at the monthly meeting; each house is not in every case inspected at the time of slaughtering. The Medical Officer of Health has accompanied the Nuisance Inspector on his visits to satisfy himself that the Bye-laws regarding the structure, drainage, water supply, and whitewashing were observed. It was noted that the water supply of one of the houses was some distance from the premises. Action was taken against one person for slaughtering on unlicensed premises and not complying with the Bye-laws. There is no Inspector for the district with a special certificate in meat inspection.

Action under Sale of Food and Drugs Act. None required.

Action under Section 117 of Public Health Act 1875. None required.

Sewerage and Drainage. The sewers of Thirsk and Sowerby are in good condition and well flushed. The greater part of the sewage is passed into septic tanks and thence into the stream. The tanks are cleaned out when required.

The Council decided to have the scavenging of Sowerby and Thirsk done by contract, and not by their own men. The contractor agrees to clean the Ashpits monthly, and pan Closets weekly; the work is not to be commenced earlier than 12 o'clock midnight, and must be completed before 9 a.m. House refuse is put into the Ashpits and removed with their contents. The refuse is the property of the contractor, who deposits it in such a manner as to create no nuisance.

The following improvements in sewage disposal have been made.

KNAYTON. 60 yards of 6" pipes laid.

CARLTON MINIOTT. Construction of Filter Tank. A scheme is now in progress to dispose of the sewage, which polluted a ditch at the East end of the parish; this nuisance was referred to in my last report, and the Council was asked to take definite action in the matter.

Schools. The following schools were closed for a period of four weeks on account of the epidemic of Measles.

Infants' School, Thirsk; National School, Thirsk; British and Foreign School, Thirsk; All Saints' R. C. School, Thirsk; St. Oswald's School, Sowerby; Kirby Wiske School; Bagby School; Pickhill School (3 weeks).

A special report on the sanitary condition, and water supply of the schools, is forwarded to the Education Authority in my capacity of Medical Inspector of school children.

Registered Lodging House. 1.—Which conforms to the Bye-laws and Regulations.

The Infectious Disease Notification Act 1889: is enforced with the addition of Measles and Whooping Cough to the diseases scheduled in the Act. All the patients suffering from infectious disease are isolated when possible. The Council supplies disinfectants, and the Inspector of Nuisances disinfects the sick room, when the case is reported to be free from infection.

The construction of an Isolation Hospital is under consideration. The Council obtains possession of the site purchased for the Hospital in April, 1910; when it is hoped the building operations will commence.

Public Health Tuberculosis Regulations 1908. Three cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified by District Medical Officers: two of these cases proved fatal. Inspections are made of the premises in which the cases occur, and inquiries made as to precautions taken to prevent the further spread of the disease. In the event of the death of the patient the Inspector of Nuisances is instructed to thoroughly disinfect the room, etc. There is no Hospital in the district for the treatment of cases of Tuberculosis.

The chief causes affecting the health of the District were the Zymotic diseases.

Diphtheria. A case was reported in Sowerby. The boy was in the habit of travelling round the country with his father who is a hawker, and probably received infection in this way. There was no insanitary condition to be found on the premises. There was no further spread of the disease. The second case was reported in Kewick. In this instance the house was in an insanitary condition. A tank to receive the domestic sewage from the scullery had no outlet, and was not properly trapped off from the interior of the house, this in all probability was the cause of the illness. No connection could be traced to the cases mentioned in my last report. The defect in sanitation was remedied with good results. No cause could be found for the third case, the patient was a nurse in a Country House. The sanitary arrangements of the house are modern and kept in perfect order. In connection with this case attention was drawn to individuals, who are termed "carriers" of infectious disease. These people though themselves not actually suffering from the disease have been proved to have the germs in the throat in cases of Diphtheria. It is quite possible that many cases the origin of which cannot be traced may have contracted the disease from apparently healthy persons.

Scarlet Fever. Two cases were reported in the First Quarter of the year. One in Cowesby the second in Thirsk. In the first case an uncle of the patient had returned from abroad, and the patient sickened within 48 hours after coming into contact with her relative. No cause could be found for the second case. The cases reported in the Third Quarter appeared at the time of the Martinmas Hirings. In previous reports attention has been called to the fact that there is frequently an outbreak of infectious disease at this time, when the children visit the shows, and mix with those who assemble together from many other districts. The districts affected were Thirsk Thornton-le-Moor and Maunby. There appeared to be a connection between the Thornton-le-Moor and Maunby outbreak. In none of the cases was there any suspicion of the milk carrying the disease.

Measles. Measles was introduced into Sowerby in the First Quarter of the year and spread rapidly in this village and Thirsk. From this source the disease in the Second Quarter spread to many of the villages in the district. All the schools in Sowerby and Thirsk were closed to prevent the further spread of the disease. In the Last Quarter the disease was introduced into the Bagby district from Ripon and spread so rapidly that it was found necessary to close the school for 4 weeks.

Whooping Cough. Whooping Cough was prevalent in the extreme Western boundary of the District. Fortunately it was confined to the villages of this area and did not reach the more populous district of Thirsk and Sowerby.

Enteric Fever. A patient in the Lambert Memorial Hospital, Thirsk, was reported to be suffering from Enteric Fever. The home of the patient was visited and found to be in an insanitary condition. The construction of the Ashpit was very defective. Instructions were given to remedy the defects; these were carried out and no other member of the family contracted the disease.

Factory and Workshop Act, 1901. Two factories were found to have deficient sanitary accommodation. Notices were sent to the owners and the necessary conveniences were erected.

Systematic inspections have been made of the District in addition to the inquiries made into particular outbreaks of disease.

WALTER I. BUCHANAN,

January 29th, 1909.

Medical Officer of Health.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1909 and previous Years.

Thirsk Rural Sanitary District.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Total deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District	Deaths of Non- Residents registered in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institu- tions beyond the District	Net Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.			
		No.	Rate*	Under 1 year of age		At all Ages					No.	Rate.*	No.	Rate.*
				No.	Rate per 1000 Births Registered	No.	Rate.*							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
1899	13016	327	25.12	36	110.09	207	15.90	9	.....	.....	207	15.90
1900	13016	335	25.73	38	113.43	204	15.67	7	.....	.....	204	15.67
1901	12710	293	23.05	33	112.62	182	14.31	7	.....	.....	182	14.31
1902	12852	298	23.18	38	127.57	150	11.67	11	.....	.....	150	11.67
1903	13015	328	25.20	27	82.31	166	12.75	5	.....	2	168	13.21	
1904	13061	301	23.04	49	162.79	198	15.15	12	.....	.....	198	15.15
1905	13102	309	24.30	28	90.61	180	14.24	12	.....	.....	180	14.24
1906	12710	324	25.49	29	89.50	186	14.63	6	.....	1	187	14.71	
1907	12710	291	22.89	29	99.65	190	14.94	9	.....	3	193	15.18	
1908	12710	284	22.34	32	112.67	179	14.08	11	1	1	179	14.08		
Average for Years 1899-1908	12890	309	24.03	33	110.12	184	14.43	8			184	14.41		
1909	12710	291	22.89	25	85.91	161	12.66	9		2	163	12.82		

* Rates in Columns 4, 8, and 13 should be calculated per 1,000 of the estimated gross population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water), 64,024.

Total Population at all ages, 12,710

Number of inhabited houses, 2,855

Average number of persons per house, 4.45

At Census of 1901.

Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District—Leeds General Infirmary.

Other Institutions, the deaths in which have been distributed among the several localities in the District—
Lambert Memorial Hospital.

Is the Union Workhouse within the District? Yes.

TABLE II.

Vital Statistics of separate Localities in 1909 and previous years.

Thirsk Rural Sanitary District.

Names of Localities.	1.—THIRSK.				2.—TOPCLIFFE.				3.—SUTTON.				4.—KNAYTON.			
	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all Ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	Births registered.	Deaths at all ages.	Deaths under 1 year.
Year	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
1899	6935	195	133	25	2140	75	43	7	1156	31	10	1	1957	36	21	3
1900	6935	199	100	21	2140	76	49	8	1156	18	30	3	1957	42	24	6
1901	7055	162	105	22	2798	57	37	4	1029	27	17	3	1828	47	23	4
1902	7145	175	97	29	2835	77	26	6	1027	14	10	0	1851	35	17	3
1903	7229	198	92	15	2876	74	41	7	1051	18	15	2	1861	38	18	3
1904	7236	163	126	36	2930	83	29	7	1051	21	14	2	1877	34	21	4
1905	7240	190	106	19	2934	70	37	4	1051	21	18	3	1877	28	19	2
1906	8272	208	111	15	2798	85	53	12	1640	31	21	2				
1907	8272	184	138	19	2798	71	35	7	1640	36	20	3				
1908	8272	177	114	15	2798	71	48	14	1640	36	17	3				
Averages of Years 1899-1908	7559	185	112	21	2704	70	39	7	1244	25	17	2				
1909	8272	178	103	15	2798	78	31	5	1640	35	27	5				

TABLE III.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year, 1909.
Thirsk Rural Sanitary District.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases notified in whole District.							Total cases notified in each locality.		
	At all Ages	At Ages—Years.						Thirsk	Topcliffe	Sutton
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upwards			
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup)	3	...	...	1	1	1	...	2	...	1
Erysipelas	7	...	...	...	1	4	2	6	1	...
Scarlet fever	10	...	1	9	...	...	...	9	...	1
Enteric fever	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Whooping Cough... ..	34	1	20	13	1	...	...	2	32	...
Measles	144	6	46	80	6	6	...	119	23	2
Totals	199	7	67	103	9	11	2	139	56	4

Isolation Hospital—None.

TABLE IV.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1909.
Thirsk Rural Sanitary District.

Causes of Death. 1	Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.							Deaths at all ages of "Residents" belonging to Localities, whether occurring in or beyond the District.			Total Deaths whether of 'Residents' or 'non-residents in public Institutions in the District. 12
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards	Thirsk	Topcliffe.	Sutton	
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Measles	6	2	3	1	...	...	...	6	...	...	...
Whooping-cough	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
Croup	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Enteric Fever	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1
Disease of Uterus & Ovaries	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
Diarrhoea	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...
Enteritis	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Gastritis	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Erysipelas	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...
Phthisis, (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	10	...	...	1	2	7	...	7	2	1	...
Other Tuberculous diseases	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
Cancer, malignant disease	9	...	...	...	...	5	4	5	3	1	...
Bronchitis	16	4	2	...	...	5	5	8	4	4	...
Pneumonia	3	2	1	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...
Alcoholism, Cirrhosis of Liver	3	...	...	...	...	1	2	3	...	...	...
Diseases of urinary organs	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
Premature Birth	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	2	...
Heart Diseases	23	...	1	...	2	7	13	12	3	8	...
Accidents	3	...	...	1	...	2	...	2	1	...	1
Disease of Nervous system	16	...	...	1	1	5	9	13	1	2	1
Convulsions	6	4	2	...	...	...	...	5	...	1	...
Old age	31	...	...	...	...	1	30	20	8	3	5
Atrophy	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Disease of digestive organs	4	1	...	...	...	3	...	2	1	1	...
All other causes	11	3	1	...	1	2	4	7	2	2	1
All Causes	161	25	14	7	7	40	68	103	31	27	9

TABLE V.

Thirsk Rural Sanitary District.

Infantile Mortality during the year 1909.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One year of Age.

Cause of Death.	Under 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks	3-4 weeks	Total under 1 mth.	1-2 months	2-3 months	3-4 months	4-5 months	5-6 months	6-7 months	7-8 months	8-9 months	9-10 months	10-11 months	11-12 months	Total deaths under 1 year.
All Causes { Certified ... { Uncertified ...	8	1	...	2	11	2	1	2	2			3	1	2		1	25
i. Common Infectious Diseases:																	
Measles ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			2	...	...		...	2
ii. Diarrhoeal Diseases :																	
Diarrhoea, all forms ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			...	1	1		1	3
iii. Wasting Diseases :																	
Premature Birth	4	...	...	1	5	...	...	...	...			...	...	...		...	5
Congenital Defects ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...			...	...	...		...	1
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	1	...			...	...	1		...	4
iv. Other Causes :																	
Convulsions	1	1	...	...	2	...	1	...	1			...	...	...		...	4
Bronchitis ... ..	...	...	...	1	1	2	...	...	1			...	...	...		...	4
Pneumonia ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1				1	...	...		...	2
	8	1	...	2	11	2	1	2	2			3	1	2		1	25

DISTRICT OF THIRSK.

Population, estimated to middle of 1909—12,710

Births in the year : Legitimate 269 ; Illegitimate 22.

Deaths in the year of Legitimate Infants 20 ; Illegitimate Infants 5.

Deaths from all Causes at all Ages, 163.

Factories, Workshops, Workplaces, and Homework.

1--INSPECTIONS.

Including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors or Inspectors of Nuisances.

FACTORIES (Including Factory Laundries)—Inspections 12 ; Prosecutions, none.

2--Defects found.

Nuisances under the Public Health Acts, insufficient Sanitary accommodation 2, remedied 2.

3--Home Work.

OUTWORKERS' LISTS, Section 107. Nature of Work.—Wearing Apparel making, &c.

Lists received from Employers twice in the year—Lists 2 ; Outworkers 4.

" " once in the year—Lists 1 ; Outworkers 1.

4—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS 74.

5—OTHER MATTERS.—None.

